

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

INFO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055095

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, HR

SUBJECT: IAHRC STORY IN WASHINGTON POST

REFERENCE: STATE 052243

1. MARCH 5 EDITION OF WASHINGTON POST CARRIES STORY BY LEWIS H. DIUGUID REPORTING ALLEGED DECISION BY THREE MEMBERS OF INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION NOT TO STAND FOR REELECTION AS A RESULT OF OAS INACTION ON CHILE REPORT. COMMISSION MEMBERS ARE ARECHAGA OF URUGUAY, CARRIO OF ARGENTINA AND WOODWARD OF UNITED STATES. INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS NOT TO RUN CAME AS SEVEN MEMBER GROUP MET TO DRAFT ANOTHER REPORT ON CHILE. QTE ALL THREE, IN SEPARATE INTERVIEWS, CITED AS FINAL BLOW THE OAS GOVERNMENTS' DECISION TO SCHEDULE THIS YEAR'S ASSEMBLY IN THE VERY COUNTRY UNDER SCRUTINY, CHILE. UNQTE. URUGUAYAN MEMBER SAID ANOTHER VISIT WOULD BE FUTILE EVEN IF CHILE PERMITTED IT BECAUSE
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COMMISSION'S ACTIVITIES WERE SEVERELY LIMITED DURING FIRST

VISIT. SOME CONCERNED US CONGRESSMEN HAVE ENCOURAGED THE COMMISSION TO MAKE ANOTHER ON-THE-SCENE INVESTIGATION BEFORE THE JUNE ASSEMBLY AND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAY THEY TOO HAVE QUIETLY URGED A RETURN VISIT. STORY CONCLUDES WITH EVIDENT REFERENCE TO TRUCCO PROPOSAL TO TIGHTEN UP IAHRV VISIT PROCEDURES (STATE 052243) NOTING QTE WITH

POSSIBLE MAJORITY OF OAS MEMBER COUNTRIES SEEKING TO FURTHER REIN IN THE COMMISSION, THE QUESTION IS WHETHER ANY INDEPENDENT NEW JURISTS WILL BE NOMINATED BEFORE THE MARCH 21 DEADLINE. UNQTE.

2. FOUR-YEAR TERMS OF ALL SEVEN IAHRV MEMBERS WILL END IN JUNE AND NOMINATIONS/RENOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY MARCH 17. AMBASSADOR WOODWARD INFORMED DEPARTMENT PRIVATELY OVER A YEAR AGO THAT HE WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED IN STANDING FOR REELECTION. WE ARE IN PROCESS OF CHOOSING NEW CANDIDATE AND WILL ADVISE POSTS SHORTLY WITH REQUEST TO SEEK HOST COUNTRIES' SUPPORT.

3. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR NOON BRIEFING ON QTE IF ASKED UNQTE BASIS:

Q: WHAT IS THE US REACTION TO THE REPORT THAT 3 MEMBERS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, INCLUDING THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, WILL NOT SERVE AGAIN BECAUSE OF THE OAS' HANDLING OF THE CHILEAN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE?

A: THE TERMS OF ALL CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE IAHRV END IN JUNE, AND THE OAS MEMBER GOVERNMENTS MUST MAKE NEW NOMINATIONS BY MARCH 17. WE HAVE NO COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS' DECISIONS REGARDING RENOMINATION.

THE US WOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO RENOMINATE AMBASSADOR WOODWARD. IT WAS HIS DECISION NOT TO BE A CANDIDATE FOR FURTHER SERVICE, AND FOR A FULL EXPLANATION OF HIS THINKING YOU SHOULD OF COURSE CONSULT HIM. IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH US HE MENTIONED PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND ALSO SUGGESTED THE USEFULNESS OF LEGAL CONFIDENTIAL

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TRAINING FOR SERVICE ON THIS COMMISSION.

Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHO THE US WILL NOMINATE?

A: THE US WILL HAVE A STRONG CANDIDATE WHO WILL BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY. THE USG, IN BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES, HAS TAKEN A STRONGLY POSITIVE INTEREST IN THE IAHRV.

Q: HAS THE DEPARTMENT SUPPORTED ANOTHER ON-THE-SCENE VISIT TO CHILE BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION BEFORE THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN SANTIAGO?

A: ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS STATED THE GENERAL US POSITION ON THIS MATTER IN THE OAS ASSEMBLY LAST MAY WHEN

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HE SAID THE US QTE BELIEVES THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SHOULD REMAIN SEIZED OF THE ISSUE. A PROCESS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THE GOC AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION IS DESIRABLE, INCLUDING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE COMMISSION TO KEEP ITS INFORMATION UP TO DATE BY ALL MEANS APPROPRIATE. UNQTE. (THE COMMISSION HAS NOT REQUESTED ANOTHER VISIT TO CHILE SINCE THE ONE MADE IN 1974.)

Q: WHY DID WE AGREE TO HOLD THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN SANTIAGO?

A: THE US ABSTAINED IN THE VOTE TO HOLD THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN CHILE. IN HIS EXPLANATION OF OUR ABSTENTION, AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD POINTED OUT QTE THE UNEASE THAT MY DELEGATION FEELS ABOUT THE PROPRIETY OF HOLDING THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN A COUNTRY WHICH HAS FAILED TO ABIDE BY AN UNDERSTANDING REACHED AMONG US IN THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY. UNQTE.

THE OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL ACCEPTED THE CHILEAN INVITATION BY A VOTE OF 17 IN FAVOR, 2 AGAINST, AND 5 ABSTENTIONS INCLUDING THE US.

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